FY 2016
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**, unless it does not apply.
Submit form (Word doc) electronically to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us by **March 25.**

(NOTE: Italicized comments are for your reference only. You may delete them when completing form.)

District Name (or "Forestwide")	Red River Ranger District
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email	Martin Jones (martinjones@fs.fed.us) (208)983-5158
Project Name	Blue Ribbon test drilling
Legal Location	T29N, R9E, SE S32, T28N, R8E, NW S3, Boise Meridian
Counties where project occurs?	Idaho
District Ranger / Line Officer's Name? *Responsible for signing the Decision Memo*	Terry Nevius
Date you informed DR / Line Officer of project?	During FY2014
Is this project already covered in another current NEPA project?	No
Watershed and subwatershed the project is located? *i.e., Clearwater, Hangman/Palouse/Rock, Lower North Fork Clearwater, Lochsa*	*Siegel Creek, tributary to Red River*

In which CE Category does this project fit? *See - O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\CE Categories*	***36 CFR 220.6(e)(8)***) Short-term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than 1 mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads. Examples include but are not limited to: (i) Authorizing geophysical investigations which use existing roads that may require incidental repair to reach sites for drilling core holes, temperature gradient holes, or seismic shot holes; (ii) Gathering geophysical data using shot hole, vibroseis, or surface charge methods; (iii) Trenching to obtain evidence of mineralization; (iv) Clearing vegetation for sight paths or from areas used for investigation or support facilities; (v) Redesigning or rearranging surface facilities within an approved site; (vi) Approving interim and final site restoration measures; and (vii) Approving a plan for exploration which authorizes repair of an existing road and the construction of 1/3 mile of temporary road; clearing vegetation from an acre of land for trenches, drill pads, or support facilities.
If this is a "36 CFR 220.6 (d)" category, does DR / Line Officer want this to be a Letter to the File (LTF – not scoped to public), or a Decision Memo (DM)? DM	
List all management areas in which your project is located. *4, 12B*	

What are the desired conditions for your management area?

MANAGEMENT AREA 4 (520 acres)

A. Description

Management Area 4 consists of active or recently active mineral extraction and processing operations. As other mining operations are identified, total acreage in this management area will increase; as areas are rehabilitated, the acres in this management area will decrease. These areas are not displayed on management area maps.

B. Goals

Encourage exploration and development of mineral resources, while at the same time minimizing surface impacts from those activities.

MANAGEMENT AREA 12 (539,884 acres)

A. Description

Management Area 12 consists primarily of forested lands. Timber productivity classes 3, 4, 5, and 6 are represented as are a variety of commercially valuable, softwood tree species. A variety of physical and biological environments occur as determined by soil, slope, aspect, elevation (approximately 3,800-6,500 feet), and climatic factors. This management area occurs across the entire non-classified portion of the Forest. Although this management area consists primarily of productive forest land, there are minor inclusions of non-forest and low productivity forest lands.

In addition to the 539,884 acres mapped for this management area, there are approximately 29,193 acres of this management emphasis which occur as inclusions in other management areas.

B. Goals

Manage for timber production and other multiple uses on a sustained yield basis. Develop equal distribution of age classes to optimize sustained timber production. Manage at levels and intensities consistent with the schedules described in this plan to provide for other multiple uses and resources. Manage for roaded natural recreation.

The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 109,444 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 310,544 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 114,225 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning.

Is the project in a Roadless Area? No

Is the project in a congressionally designated area (i.e., Wilderness, Wild & Scenic Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historical Trail, etc.)? No

Does the project involve road construction, reconstruction, temporary roads, or haul routes?
Yes

If yes, answer the questions for 'Projects Involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, or Haul Routes' below.

Is the project in Research Natural Area(s)? No *If yes, which one(s)?*
Are Municipal Watersheds located in the project area? No *If yes, which one(s)?*
Are floodplains, wetlands or RHCAs located in the project area? Yes
Is the project in the Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area? No
Describe the current conditions of the project area and the Need for the proposed action: **Current Condition** The project area lies within previously disturbed and undisturbed areas within the Siegel Creek drainage. The area is vegetated with predominately upland vegetation and timber of mixed species, with some areas of riparian vegetation. **Purpose and Need** The purpose of the proposed action is to test for gold values on unpatented mining claims. The need is to determine if sufficient quantities of valuable minerals exist to warrant further development of a mining operation.

Describe the Proposed Action:

Goldski, LLC, proposes exploratory drilling in the Siegel Creek area of the Red River Ranger District. The project is located at Township 29N, Range 9E, SE ¼ of section 32 and Township 28N, Range 8E, NW ¼ of section 3, Boise Meridian. Part of the project area is accessed by taking State Highway 14 to Forest Road 222 (Red River Road), then to Forest Road 9822 to Forest Road 1182C to the northernmost test sites. The remainder if the project area is accessed by taking State Highway 14 to Forest Road 222 (Red River Road), then to Forest Road 1182 (Siegel Creek) approximately 3.5 miles to the southernmost project area.

The proposal is for a total of six drill sites. Each of these drill sites is anticipated to be approximately 30' X 50' in size. A maximum of two holes may be drilled at each site. These holes are anticipated to be 3"to 6" in diameter and from 750' to 1000' deep. Drilling depths may be adjusted as targets become more defined. These holes will be drilled using 1 to 3 self contained, track mounted drill rigs operating concurrently. The drill rigs will be self leveling to minimize the need for a leveling excavation of the drill area. A sump or infiltration gallery will be dug at each site to contain drill fluid and to allow drill cuttings to settle out. This sump will measure approximately 2' wide by 3'-4' deep and approximately 20' long. Drill fluid will be comprised of water and a clay derivative. The operation will require between 500 and 1000 gallons of water per day per drill rig. In the event that water is used from Forest lands, a water use permit will be obtained from the Idaho Department of Water Resources, and the water withdrawal site will be reviewed by Forest Service specialists before water is taken from any stream.

Upon completion of drilling, each drill hole will be filled and plugged according to the State of Idaho Best Management Practices (BMP's) for filling and plugging drill holes. Upon abandonment of a drill site, sumps will be allowed to dewater through percolation and evaporation, then backfilled. Topsoil will be replaced, duff and woody debris scattered over the area if available, and the area seeded and mulched as necessary. If earth leveling is required for any drill pad the area will be restored to original contour, topsoil replaced, and the site will be revegetated. Each site will be reclaimed when work at that site is completed before moving on to the next drill site. Each drill site will be accessed using existing access roads, old road templates or by overland travel. It is possible some minor temporary road construction will be required to access some of the sites. Placement of these roads will be determined by a field review which will include the operator and Forest Service specialists. Areas impacted by equipment travel will be reconditioned as needed, mulched with existing duff and woody debris, and seeded as required as part of the reclamation of the drill site it accesses. Required surface disturbance to reach individual drill sites will be minimal and may require some brushing of existing road templates or overland routes. 4 X 4 pickups will be used to support drilling activities. Other equipment used will be a small backhoe to dig infiltration galleries, a small cat to conduct reclamation activities, and 4x4 ATVs. A low ground pressure ATV or a pickup truck will be used to transport drill core and supplies.

Up to three sites may be active at any one time depending on the number of drills in operation. Bonding will be based on the number of drill rigs used and the number of sites active at a time. As drilling is nearing completion at one site, the next site will be prepared ahead of time to minimize the amount of time the drill rig will need to sit idle. Once the drill rig has been removed from a site, needed reclamation will be completed for that site as soon as practicable. A reclamation bond will be calculated based on the estimated cost of reclaiming each active and each recently abandoned site. A bond sufficient to cover the cost of all anticipated surface disturbance will be submitted by the operator before the Plan of Operation is approved and before work may begin.

What Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used with this project?

State of Idaho BMPs for Mining. Standardized mitigation for mining developed by Nez Perce Forest.

List specific stakeholder individuals/groups/businesses within the districts impacted by this project who should be contacted (along with their email and mailing addresses) during the Scoping process: *(NOTE: tribes/state/county governments will already be contacted)*

PLEASE ATTACH TO YOUR PROJECT SUBMISSION EMAIL AND SEPARATE FROM THIS FORM, THE FOLLOWING PROJECT MAPS (PDF FORMAT ONLY). THESE INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE FOLLOWED EXACTLY. DO NOT GIVE LINKS TO MAPS OR DATASETS.

At least one 1:24000 map, with a "portrait" orientation page setup, showing project location, project boundary and/or project effect locations, with any pertinent roads, trails, streams, landmarks, etc. If that scale map does not include nearby towns/major roads/major landmarks, use a map insert showing the project area related to MAJOR landmarks in the area. Also, if that scale map does not show the full project area, please have one reasonably scaled location map, showing the full project area, plus other maps showing parts of the project. The point is that the maps should be as thorough and few in number as possible for both the public and forest resource specialists to easily know exactly where your project activities will be!

To be included: project map, GoogleEarth image showing landscape and position of test sites, Word document with list of UTM locations of test sites.

IDT specialists for the project are listed below. Contact them if you should have any questions regarding their resource and your project.

Cultural – Steve Lucas, slucas@fs.fed.us**;** 983-4040
Fisheries – Katherine Thompson, ktthompson@fs.fed.us; 935-4266
Plants – Mike Hays, mhays01@fs.fed.us; 983-4028
Recreation – Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us; 935-4270
Soils/Hydrology – Andre Snyder, ajsnyder@fs.fed.us; 476-8316
Wildlife – Rema Sadak, rsadak@fs.fed.us; 935-4289

Projects in Roadless Areas

What is the Roadless Area name? *O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\Roadless Rule Info*	**Idaho Roadless Area (IRA) Name:** **Forest Plan IRA Name *(if different than IRA):***
Identify the Idaho Roadless Management classification because permitted activities vary by classification. *Classifications include:* • *Wild land recreation* • *Special Areas of historic or Tribal Significance* • *Primitive* • *Backcountry restoration* • *General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland*	**Classification:**
Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? Yes *If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2/xml/CFR-2011-title36-vol2-sec294-23.xml*	
Does the project involve cutting trees? Yes No *If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2/xml/CFR-2011-title36-vol2-sec294-24.xml*	
Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? Yes No *If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2/xml/CFR-2011-title36-vol2-sec294-25.xml*	

Projects Involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, and/or Haul Routes

Specialists will address items 9-11 *(in italics)* below.

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS	YES/ NO	MITIGATION MEASURE/COMMENTS
1. Will road construction or reconstruction be required? Type of road and length.	Yes	See #2 below
2. Will temporary roads be needed?	Yes	It is possible some minor temp road construction will be required to reach some sites. To be determined during field review.
3. Will road maintenance be needed? Who will perform?		
4. Will there be a change to the current road restrictions?		
5. Are haul roads part of an established snowmobile network?		
6. Are there public safety concerns for roads, trails, or other road improvements?		
7. Are there other improvements which will require protection?		
8. Does the area currently meet Forest Plan standards for soils?		
9. Will the project impact elk security?		*Specialist will answer*
10. Will the project or log haul impact winter range?		*Specialist will answer*
11. Will the project impact critical elk summer range?		*Specialist will answer*

Updated 1/25/16, JC